

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please **cancel claims 2 and 10** without prejudice or disclaimer, and **amend claims 1, 3-5, 9, and 11** as follows:

1. (*Currently amended*) A data reader arranged to read ~~data~~ ~~comprising~~ user data and non-user data written across at least two channels of a data-holding medium, said data being arranged into a plurality of data items each ~~containing~~ including user data and non-user data, ~~with~~ said non-user data holding information relating to said user data, the information including write pass number information, and data items written across the said channels at the same time being identified as a set of data items, said write pass number information being included in a header for each said data item, said header including header error detection information, said data reader comprising an arrangement for holding a current write pass number, ~~and having~~ a read head for reading a respective said channel of said data-holding medium ~~to generate and for~~ thereby deriving a data signal ~~comprising~~ having said data items, and processing circuitry arranged to (a) receive and process said data signals of a set of data items, including processing said write pass number information of each of said data items in said set, ~~and causing~~ (b) receive updating of said current write pass number held by said data reader on the basis of the write pass number information of said data items in said set, and (c) process (i) said header error detection information and (ii) said write pass number information for each said data item in said set before updating said current write pass number.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently amended) A data reader according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein said processing circuitry ~~causes updating of~~ is arranged to update said current write pass number held by said data reader on the basis of said write pass number information of said headers of each said data item in said set which are correct.

4. (Currently amended) A data reader according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein said circuitry updates said write pass number if at least a given number of said correct headers agree on it.

5. (Currently amended) A data reader according to claim [[2]] 1, wherein said circuitry updates said write pass number if there is at least a given number of said correct headers and all of those have the same write pass number.

6. (Previously presented) A data reader according to claim 4, wherein said given number is variable.

7. (Currently amended) A data reader according to claim 1, wherein said processing circuitry ~~interrupts~~ is arranged to interrupt processing when in response to said write pass number information ~~is being~~ such as to cause an update, to enable further processing circuitry to check said write pass number information to confirm the updating.

8. (Original) A data storage device incorporating a data reader according to claim 1.

9. (Currently amended) A method of reading ~~data comprising~~ user data and non-user data written across at least two channels of a data-holding medium, said data being arranged into a plurality of data items each ~~containing~~ including user data and non-user data, ~~with~~ said non-user data holding information relating to said user data, including write pass number information, said write pass number information being included in a header for each said data item, said header including header error detection information, and the data items written across the said channels at the same time being identified as a set of data items, said method comprising:

reading each said channel of said data-holding medium;

generating a data signal comprising said data items for each said channel;

processing said data signals of a set of data items, the processing including (a) determining a write pass number from said write pass number information of each of said data items in said set, (b) determining which of said headers is in error by processing said header error detection information; and

updating a current write pass number held by a data reader on the basis of said write pass numbers of said data items in said set.

10. (Cancelled)

**11.** (*Currently amended*) A method according to claim **[[10]]** **9**, wherein said step of processing said data signals comprises determining which of said headers of said data items in said set are correct, determining the write pass numbers of those data items and comparing the write pass numbers of said data items with the current write pass number held by said data reader.

**12.** (*Original*) A method according to claim **11**, wherein said step of comparing the write pass numbers of said data items includes determining how many of said correct headers have the same write pass number, and whether that number of headers exceeds a given number.

**13.** (*Original*) A method according to claim **11**, wherein said step of comparing the write pass numbers of said data items includes determining whether there are at least a given number of correct headers, and whether all of those have the same write pass number.

**14.** (*Original*) A method according to claim **12**, wherein said write pass number of said data items is compared with said current write pass number to determine whether updating is required.

**15.** (*Original*) A method according to claim **12**, wherein said given number is variable.